

# IN OUR BACKYARD

CANADIAN

DEC - 7 1992



AN UPDATE FROM THE ALBERTA SPECIAL WASTE MANAGEMENT CORPORATION

Fall 1992 Vol. 3 No. 3

## Interview

The recently-approved expansion to the Alberta Special Waste Treatment Centre is expected to make a major impact on the province's increasing backlog of hazardous and special wastes. It's an addition which is considered essential if Alberta is to maintain its present leadership in the field of hazardous waste management and treatment. We asked Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation President Ken Simpson what the expansion would mean to Albertans:

*Q: Now that expansion of the Alberta Special Waste Treatment Centre has been approved, when will construction begin?*

A: The final tendering and vendor selection, as well as the final design, is under way now, and I would expect that we will break ground around late fall of '92.

*Q: Will any of the tendering be done on a local basis?*

A: Although some specialized equipment is available only through a limited number of international vendors, much of the auxiliary technology and the whole process of installation and commissioning will call for the involvement of local, regional and provincial suppliers.

*Q: Will this increase employment in Swan Hills?*

A: Definitely. There will be an immediate increase in activity during the construction period, estimated at 140 people over two years, followed by a long-term increase in employment for the expanded facility and the on-going operations.

*Q: Will the long-term employment add to the work force at the Treatment Centre?*

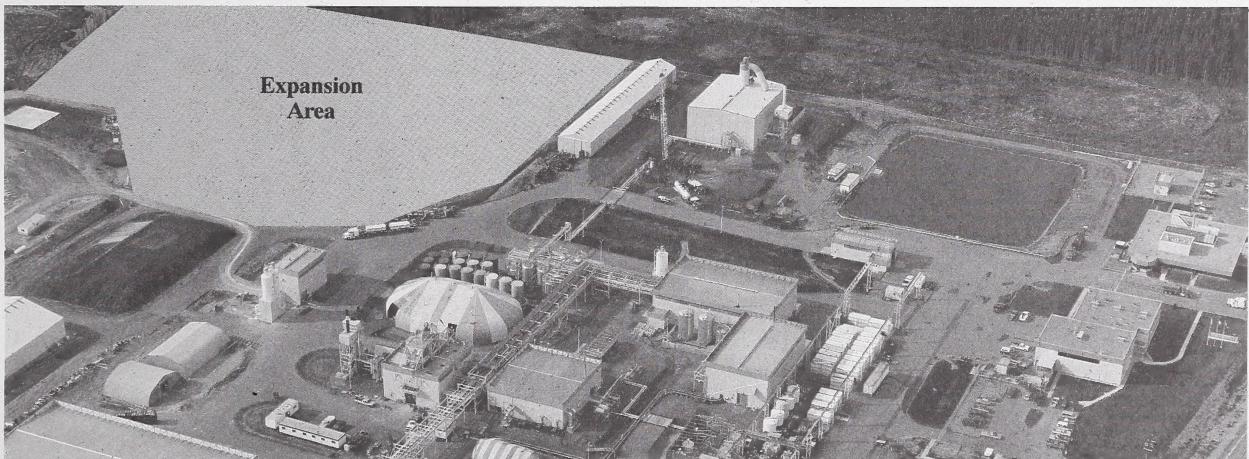
A: We're looking at an addition of between twenty and forty full-time jobs.

*Q: With the increased size of facilities, can we expect corresponding monitoring activity?*

A: Most certainly, you'll see comprehensive monitoring on the kiln itself. As far as the regional monitoring results are concerned, we're expecting a decrease in overall emissions because this is a new generation of technology which is much more efficient.

*Q: When can we expect the new kiln to be in operation?*

A: We're working towards early 1994 for



Produced quarterly by the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation, "In Our Backyard" is intended to keep Albertans updated on issues and solutions in hazardous waste management. You can contribute to the process by "recycling" this newsletter. Pass it on to a friend with your comments. And should you have suggestions you wish to share, pass them on to us. Our address, phone and fax number are on Page 4.



Alberta  
Special Waste  
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Corporation  
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the end of construction with the facility commissioned and commercially operational by mid-1994.

*Q: The backlog of waste in the meantime: will it be building up and where is it?*

A: We could certainly use this kiln today. Waste is accumulating daily and we have no option but to store it. We are presently looking at short-term storage until the expansion is completed. This increasing backlog is the reason why we're anxious to see the expansion completed as soon as possible.

*Q: Enforcing the regulations seems to pose quite a challenge.*

A: It does. But Alberta Environment has become very adept at working with generators to solve problems on a cooperative basis – but with the option of prosecution. They have very dedicated people working on this and there's a lot of knowledge within that organization. The message is getting out that they mean business – which is good for us, because informed and fair enforcement of the regulations is what is needed to make the system work.

## RRRResounding Farewell for Bob Clark



When Bob Clark, Chairman of the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation, was appointed Alberta's new Ethics Commissioner in April, ASWMC staff seized the opportunity to promote the Four Rs message. Arrayed in Four Rs T-shirts at Mr. Clark's farewell are Ron McKague, Vice-President Finance and Administration; Mark Polet, Vice-President Operations; Ken Simpson, President and CEO; Bob Clark; Tom Thackeray, Vice-President Policy, Planning & Development; and Irene Chanin, Vice-President, Communications.

*Q: Not just the technology?*

A: Not totally. For instance, some countries are developing very sophisticated mechanical systems which will undoubtedly prove useful in the long run but, in our experience, waste management is not, totally, a technological problem. You first have to solve the social and economic issues.

*Q: Alberta is nonetheless an exporter of waste management technology.*

A: This is increasingly true. Our corporation was recently in China, working with the city of Shenyang and the province of Liaoning to establish systems to control hazardous wastes. We have two memoranda of understanding signed with the city and the province and we are working on several other projects, mainly on a city by city basis. Also, we are trying to work directly with the national environmental protection agency. Their leader was here in May viewing our facilities and they're looking for help in establishing systems for regulatory control and management.

*Q: Do you expect this to produce business for the waste service industry in Alberta? You mentioned two particular centres.*

A: China could probably use thirty or forty treatment centres today. We're talking to them about the kinds of systems that are appropriate – which are not necessarily similar to Swan Hills. A centre might need a system to protect its water supply, for instance, or simply some general waste management expertise. We are becoming involved in addressing the China problem as a whole – which promises to be beneficial for the waste management and environmental industries in Alberta.

*Q: Is this expected to make a significant effect on Alberta's economy?*

A: The potential is there. Our environmental industry includes consultants, engineers, manufacturers, laboratories and so on. All of these have valuable experience to share as China pursues greater industrialization. There are literally trillions of dollars to be spent over the next decade by the countries of the Far East as they become more active in working towards environmental solutions.

**Continued on page 4**

## New Chairman takes over

With Bob Clark's appointment as Alberta's first Ethics Commissioner the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation welcomed a worthy successor, Ralph Klein, Minister of the Environment, announced the appointment of Al Maiani C.A. as Chairman of the provincial crown corporation.

A member of the Board since April 1991, Mr. Maiani has been closely involved in establishing the direction of the Alberta Special Waste Management System, particularly in the planned expansion of the Alberta Special Waste Treatment Centre.

His wealth of experience includes the chairmanship of such organizations as the Canadian College of Health Service Executives, the provincial Mental Health Advisory Council, and the Association of Canadian Medical Colleges.

The activities of the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation are governed by a Board appointed by the Lieutenant Governor on the basis of



Al Maiani, newly-appointed Chairman of the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation.

recommendations by the Minister of the Environment. The interests of Albertans are represented by the appointed board members, who have proved their effectiveness in business, technology and public affairs.

# Educating Ourselves about Waste

In every issue of *In Our Backyard*, we devote this page to the simple things everyone can do to minimize special wastes. Since the best way to clean up the mess ... is to make less, we can make an enormous difference just by cutting back on the use of products which generate hazardous garbage.



## REDUCE

Reducing the volume of waste is the first priority in our famous Four Rs – and it's something we can do with no appreciable drop in our standard of living. Some suggestions:

- *Look for consumer products that don't have hazard symbols on the label.* Many modern water-based house paints, for example, are not hazardous.
- *Share information with your family and friends about alternatives and their effectiveness,* keeping in mind that large quantities of even natural materials may have

a negative effect on the environment.

• *Use up the products you have on hand and buy new amounts appropriate to the volume you will need and the shelf life of the product.* A simple way to record how much you use of a pesticide, for example, is to mark the container before and after use. Ask yourself: are you buying this product to *use it*, or to *store it*?

• *Mark your calendar now so you can plan ahead before making purchases.* Keep track of products that are potential special waste by organizing your work and storage areas. You'll become more aware of the risks of garden supplies, like pesticides and herbicides; hobby products, like art supplies and handicraft materials; do-it-yourself mechanical items, like motor oil, lubricants, solvents and paints.

## RE-USE

Find or create ways to *re-use the products you already have.* Many craftspeople, for instance, commonly use old solvent for a first cleaning, saving the fresh product for a final rinse. Look for opportunities to *share products with*

*friends and neighbours* rather than buying too much and throwing away leftovers.

## RECYCLE

*By taking a little care in handling products, you create better recycling opportunities for special waste.* Oil and water-based paints should be kept separate. Water-based paint can't be re-used or recycled if it has been frozen. Separately, materials like motor oil and glycol are easily recycled. If they are mixed, however, they become hazardous waste requiring expensive special treatment.

*Take advantage of the increased recycling opportunities available at community Toxic Round Up days,* particularly those in larger centres. In many cases, you'll find arrangements in place to recycle used oil, glycol, paint, lead acid batteries and paint cans. It takes a little effort, but it's eminently worthwhile. Recycling these materials through your municipality not only helps to protect the environment, it saves tax dollars that would otherwise be spent on waste treatment.

## Minimizing Waste saves money for Small Business

A recent pilot project on waste minimization conducted in Red Deer turned up some money-saving ideas for small business. Typical of these economies were the savings achievable in the autobody repair business, where the study showed how overall paint use and waste can be cut significantly by using high-volume, low-pressure spray equipment.

The project showed that virtually every office can save a bundle by employing scrap paper for telephone pads. And for any organization, replacing incandescent light bulbs with energy efficient models or compact fluorescent lamps is a very bright idea.

If you're a medium to small business looking for ways to save money, you'll find these and other money-saving suggestions in a new series of fact sheets called *Waste Minimization in the Workplace*.

Developed by ASWMC, Alberta Environment, and the provincial Action on Waste program in cooperation with Alberta Public Works and the City of Red Deer, the fact sheets contain specific how-to ideas for auto service and repair shops, maintenance yards, offices, printers, photographic developers and grocery stores.

Tom Thackeray, ASWMC's Vice-President of Policy, Planning and Development, is enthusiastic over this cooperative approach to reducing waste:

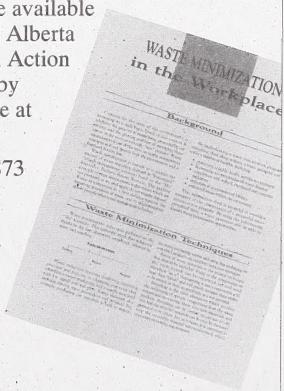
*"We had received a number of enquiries from small businesses wanting to know more about minimizing the wastes in their everyday operations. So we invited small businesses in Red Deer to take part in the pilot program."*

*Each participating business examined its current waste management practices,*

*completed a survey, and was provided with recommendations on how to reduce their waste flow. Based on their experiences, and suggestions, we developed the information in the fact sheets."*

Waste Minimization in the Workplace fact sheets are available by contacting Alberta Environment, Action on Waste, or by calling us here at ASWMC:

1-800-272-8873



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**ALBERTA SPECIAL WASTE  
MANAGEMENT CORPORATION**  
**610 – 10909 Jasper Ave.**  
**Edmonton, Alberta**  
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## Interview

Continued from page 2

*Q: Recently, we have seen the Corporation encouraging the use of the 4Rs on television. Is there a particular reason for promoting this at this time?*

*A: Yes, there is. We have to keep emphasizing that waste minimization is a key part of any successful waste management program.*

Simple economics demonstrate that we, as citizens, just can't afford to keep generating wastes unchecked. The 4Rs promotion has been very successful in encouraging Albertans to consider the consequences and think of alternatives.

*Q: Has hazardous waste become a fact of life; something we have to learn to live with?*

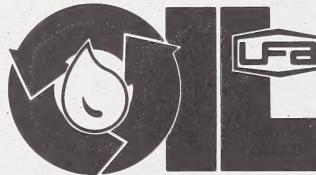
*A: Let's hope not. Personally, I feel that we can go a long way to reduce and minimize the amount of waste produced while ensuring that the remainder is safely treated and disposed of.*

## Alternatives

Recycling is an excellent alternative to treating hazardous wastes – in industry and in the household. Just as newspapers and aluminum cans are now being successfully collected and recycled, so can many of our household wastes be directed into new uses. Some examples:

### Used Motor Oil

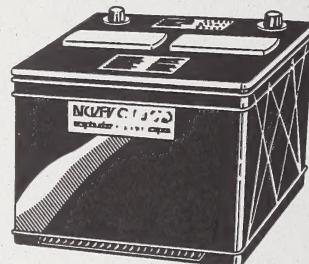
Turn it into any UFA location participating in Oil Recovery Alberta, or to service stations displaying an Oil Drop sign. Used motor oil can be burned as fuel or refined to pristine condition.



### Car Batteries

Never, ever dump batteries. Not only can the lead in the battery be recovered, but

many dealers will pay you for this recoverable scrap metal.



### Used Photo Fixer

Amateur photographers can recover the silver from used fixer by running it through a special cartridge or (since it may not be economical to purchase your own equipment) by passing it on to a company specializing in this service. Not only is the silver valuable but – as a toxic substance – it doesn't get into the sewage system to damage the environment. Look under Silver Recovery in the Yellow Pages.

## CALL DIRECT:

### ▲ For information on:

- Hazardous Waste Management Programs in Alberta
- Toxic Round Ups
- Community Study Groups
- Used Oil Programs
- Waste Minimization

**ALBERTA SPECIAL  
WASTE MANAGEMENT  
CORPORATION**  
**1-800-272-8873**  
**422-5029 (Edmonton)**  
**428-9627 (Fax)**

### ▲ For information on the transportation of dangerous goods:

**ALBERTA PUBLIC  
SAFETY SERVICES**  
**1-800-272-9600**  
(24 Hours)

### ▲ For a directory of waste management companies in Alberta:

**ENVIRONMENTAL  
SERVICES ASSOCIATION  
OF ALBERTA**  
**439-6363 (Edmonton)**  
**HOTLINE**  
(for small businesses)  
**1-800-661-WASTE (9278)**

### ▲ For information on:

- Recycling: Newspaper, Metals, Plastics, Clothing
- RECYCLING BRANCH,  
ALBERTA  
ENVIRONMENT**  
**427-5838 (Edmonton)**  
**297-5925 (Calgary)**

### ▲ To report an environmental emergency or to register a complaint:

**POLLUTION CONTROL  
DIVISION, ALBERTA  
ENVIRONMENT**  
**1-800-222-6514**

### ▲ To access the clearing house that puts potential users of waste materials in contact with waste producers:

**ALBERTA WASTE  
MATERIALS EXCHANGE**  
**450-5408 (Edmonton)**

**ALBERTA SPECIAL  
WASTE MANAGEMENT  
CORPORATION**  
**610 – 10909 Jasper Ave.**  
**Edmonton, Alberta**  
**T5J 3L9**



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